

GREAT WHITE THRONE AND ITS BLESSINGS

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PASTOR RUSSELL.

London, Eng., Nov. 6.—Pastor Russell of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, New York, preached here today. Royal Albert Hall held a vast audience of deeply interested hearers. The speaker chose his text from Revelation 12:11:—

"I saw a great

White Throne, and

him that sat on it, from whose face

the earth and the heaven fled away,

and there was found no place for them." He said:

Sin made moral cowards of our race.

From early infancy fear and apprehension,

especially in respect to things future,

have been impressed upon us.

We realize our imperfection, and that

our God is perfect, and that perfection

is the only standard which he could

approve, and that some kind of punishment

for sin must be expected. The

Adversary, taking advantage of our

forefathers, misrepresented the Al-

mighty and has used our fears to

alienate us from him and to wrest and

distort his message to us in the Bible.

St. Paul assures us that this is Satan's

general procedure; that he puts light

for darkness and darkness for light.

Thus it comes that our text, which is

really one of the most beautiful and

comforting in the whole Bible when

rightly understood, has to many be-

come a lash in the hands of their fears.

It is needless to say that our text is

one of the symbols of a Book filled

with symbols. God's people, guided by

his holy Spirit, in due time will ap-

preciate these symbols. For many of

them the due time is already here.

The Throne is Messiah's. It represents

his Mediatorial Dominion of earth for

a thousand years. Its whiteness sym-

bolizes the purity, the justice, of his

Kingdom of righteousness under the

whole heavens. The heavens and

earth which will flee away from the

presence of the great Emmanuel will

not be the heavens of God's Throne,

nor the earth which he has given to

the children of men. The heavens and

earth which will flee away, and for

which no place will be found, are, of

course, the symbolical ones. In Bible

symbolology the earth represents estab-

lished civilization; the sea represents

the restless, dissatisfied masses of hu-

manity. The mountains symbolize hu-

man governments, kingdoms, which

constitute the backbone of present

spiritual influences—Ecclesiasticalism,

Churchianity. Thus interpreted our

text declares that when Messiah shall

assume control of the world; when he

shall sit upon his Throne; when he

shall exercise rulership amongst men,

the result will be that the social sys-

tem of today, as well as the present

day ecclesiasticalism, will flee away,

will pass out of existence—no place will

be found for them.

Satan Now the Prince.

Some men may be inclined to ask.

Has not Christ been the great ruler

of the world for those past nineteen

centuries? And whatever may be said

of the four thousand years before the

coming of Christ may it not be claimed

that he has been reigning ever since

his ascension to the right hand of the

Father? We answer that if this be

true; if the Redeemer of men has been

reigning as the King of earth for

these nineteen centuries, there should

be something in the Bible to teach.

But we find nothing. On the contrary,

we hearken to the Master's own words

telling us that Satan is the Prince of

this age (John 14:30). We hearken

to him again telling us, "My Kingdom

is not of this world" (John 18:36).

Again he says, "I will come again

and receive you unto myself" (John

14:3). Again he tells us that he went

into a far country to receive the title

to his Kingdom, then to return to take

possession of it (Matthew 23:35; Luke

19:11, 12), and that at his second coming

he will be the great King of glory. He

tells us the same thing in Matthew

25:31, "When the Son of Man shall

come in his glory, and all the holy an-

gels with him, then shall he sit upon

the throne of his glory."

On the other hand, as we scan

the pages of history during the past eigh-

teen centuries, we are convinced that

Messiah has not been the King of the

world. To think of him as such, with

the omnipotent power which we ac-

credit to him, would be to charge him

with responsibility for bloody and

atrocious persecutions and wars and

famines and pestilences. It is no

right-minded person, after mature con-

sideration, can rationally accept the

theory that the glorious Messiah's

reign of righteousness for the blessing

of the whole earth, the uplifting of

every creature, and the bringing of all

possible into accord with God—none of

the great Mediator between God and men

is in the past. We must agree with

our text that it is in the future, and

that, when established, its effect upon

the institutions of the present—politi-

cal, social, financial, religious—will

be such that they will flee away; no

place ever more will be found for

them. Ah! from this standpoint there

is hope; but from no other standpoint.

We are living today at the very cli-

max of civilization. Yet today we be-

hold more clearly than ever before

that the deeply-ingrained selfishness

of humanity is a blight upon all the

blessings and conveniences and advan-

tages of our day.

The Curse of Selfishness.

I need not do more than remind

you that selfishness is to be found in

every one of us, and that a semblance

of righteousness is insisted upon by us

all and adhered to, and violators of it

are styled criminals. Nevertheless it

seems impossible to legislate equity.

Justice. The keen intellects of men

opportunities for circumventing

laws and for committing theft and

murder and sin in the face of laws and

without danger of being punished.

Let us illustrate this: We have heard

of the famines of India and how the

British Government has spent millions

of "pounds sterling" for irrigation pur-

poses to compensate for irregularities

in the rain-fall. Undoubtedly the fam-

ines are to some extent due to water

scarcity. Nevertheless, one of the

ablest of our engineers informs the

world that there has not been in fifty

years such a scarcity as should have

created the famines. The famines of

India, which have cost the lives of

millions, are to be accredited to greed

—selfishness which has flourished un-

der the shadow of the law. Wealthy

milling concerns purchase the rice from

the natives and grind it into flour. By

agreement between themselves they do

not compete, but press the market

price of rice lower and lower until the

poor native, unable to make a profit,

declines to plant, care for and harvest

the crop. As a result there is famine.

The poor natives suffer; but the man-

agers of the milling properties pay

large dividends of from fifty to one

hundred and fifty per cent. on invested

capital to the wealthy owning them.

As an illustration of the exorbitant

profits I will relate a case: Two young

men whose accumulated savings

amounted to thirty thousand rupees

(about two thousand pounds, or ten

thousand dollars) invested it in rice-

milling. Their profits for the first year

were eighty thousand rupees—about

five thousand pounds, or twenty-five

thousand dollars. They were not in

the combine to depress the price of

rice, but they profited by what the

combine accomplished. These inequities

of our present social order are

beyond the reach and correction of

the comparatively few men of ability

not directly or indirectly interested in

them.

The White Throne Judgment.

Neither Jehovah nor his great Repre-

sentative, Messiah, can in any sense

or degree be a party to injustice or in-

equity. The fact that injustice has

been permitted, and that inequity

has been the rule for centuries, is

to be accounted for by the other

fact that during all this period the

world has been under the reign of sin

and death, and not under the reign of

righteousness and life; it has been un-

der the reign of Satan, "the Prince of

this world" and of the darkness of

selfishness and evil—all of which his

name represents—and not under the

dominion of Messiah, the Representa-

tive of Jehovah, and his righteousness;

not under the King of glory, the anti-

typical David and Solomon, the anti-

typical Aaron and Melchisedec. The

New Dispensation which Messiah's

Kingdom will usher in is pictured in

our text. It will be the dominion that

will be world-wide—pure, holy, right-

eous, just, truthful, God-like—a great

White Throne. No wonder we read

that the symbolical heavens and earth,

representing the old order of things—

social, ecclesiastical—will all vanish

away.

But let no one think for a moment

that ecclesiastical princes, financial

princes and political princes will vol-

untarily acknowledge that the hour

has come for a full surrender to Mes-

siah and to all the principles of his

absolute righteousness. On the contrary,

these privileged members of our race

will more and more be drawn together

for mutual protection—for the pres-

ervation of the special privileges which

have come into their possession. Even

now we see the prophecy of the Sec-

ond Psalm fulfilling. We are in the

very time when the Lord, through the

Prophet David, calls the great ones

of the earth to recognize the true situ-

ation of our wonderful day—that it

means that the Day of Messiah has

arrived, and that he should be recog-

nized and his principles of righteous-

ness obeyed.

The call is recognized. Salute the

Son, O ye kings of the earth, while ye

are in the way with him, before his

anger be kindled and ye perish by the

way (Psalm 110:1-2). But no, the

prophecy declares that we are in the

day when the people, the masses, will

have foolish imaginations—when they

will think that by their own strength

they can inaugurate a reign of right-

eousness along the lines of Socialism

or by anarchy. The people must

learn that their help is in the Lord

and not in their own frail arm. The

people must see the force of the state-

ment, "Blessed are all they that put

their trust in Messiah" (verse 12). The

Lord is about to establish the great

White Throne of absolute justice in

the world.

On the other hand, the money kings

and earthly rulers and ecclesiastical

princes are taking counsel together to-

day for the preservation of the present

inequities of the world, by which they

are profiting. The Lord